

# Preventing and Treating the H1N1 Flu

### What is H1N1 flu (commonly known as "swine flu")?

H1N1 flu is a respiratory infection caused by a new flu virus that is different from the virus that causes the seasonal flu. Both types of the flu can be serious.

### How is H1N1 flu spread?

The main way that influenza viruses spread is through droplets from a sick person when they cough or sneeze. Flu viruses can also live on surfaces such as tables, faucets, or doorknobs for up to eight hours. You can become infected with H1N1 flu by touching an infected surface, then touching your eyes, nose, or mouth.

### What are the symptoms of H1N1 flu?

Many of the symptoms of H1N1 flu are the same as the symptoms of the seasonal flu. These include fever, dry cough, sore throat, stuffy nose, body aches, headache, and tiredness.

### Should you get vaccinated against H1N1 flu?

Though anyone can get a flu shot, we strongly encourage vaccinations for:

- Pregnant women
- People living with or caring for infants under six months of age
- Emergency medical services personnel and health care workers
- Children and young adults from six months through 24 years
- People aged 25 through 64 years with chronic medical conditions like heart or lung disease, asthma, diabetes, or weakened immune systems

If you want a vaccination, call your doctor to arrange one. If you do not have health coverage, call 2-1-1 and operators will help you find the nearest flu clinic. Or go to <http://www.publichealth.lacounty.gov/>.

### Why aren't H1N1 flu vaccines recommended for older adults?

Unlike seasonal flu, H1N1 flu has caused fewer complications for older adults. This may be because older adults were exposed to the viruses in past years and have some immunity (ability to recognize and fight off the virus). Therefore, with limited vaccine available, efforts will focus on those most likely to have serious health problems.

### FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)  
(800) CDC-INFO or (800) 232-4636  
[www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu](http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu)

California Department of Public Health  
(888) 865-0564  
[www.cdph.ca.gov](http://www.cdph.ca.gov)

Los Angeles County Department of Public Health  
Health Care Services: Dial 2-1-1

<http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/H1N1>

DPH Update listserv:

E-mail [Listserv@listserv.ph.lacounty.gov](mailto:Listserv@listserv.ph.lacounty.gov)

Include "subscribe DPHUPDATE first name last name" in the subject line and body

Los Angeles County Department of Public Health

<http://publichealth.lacounty.gov>



## How is H1N1 flu treated?

### Practice good hygiene habits

- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
- Cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue or your sleeve.
- Wash your hands often using soap and warm water for 20 seconds. (When soap is not available, use hand sanitizer.)



### Practice good housekeeping habits

- Open windows to let fresh air into shared areas.
- Keep surfaces clean by wiping them down with a household disinfectant.
- Use a dishwasher or hot water and soap to clean eating utensils.
- Avoid "hugging" dirty laundry when handling it to prevent getting sick.



### Separate people who are sick

- Avoid close contact with people who are sick. (Stay three feet away from them if you can.)
- People who are sick should sleep and eat meals in a separate room, if possible.
- Arrange beds so that people lay head-to-toe relative to each other.



### Manage symptoms at home

- People who are sick should stay home until 24 hours after their fever ends.
- Drink clear fluids like water, broth, and sports drinks to keep from being dehydrated.
- Do **not** give aspirin or products that contain aspirin to children or teenagers 18 years old or younger.
- Children younger than four years old should **not** be given over-the-counter cold medications without speaking to a health care provider.



### *People who are sick should seek emergency medical care if they have...*

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Fast breathing or trouble breathing</li><li>● Chest pain</li><li>● Trouble keeping liquids down</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Confusion</li><li>● Sudden dizziness</li><li>● Bluish or gray skin color</li></ul> |
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